

CHALLENGE



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Howard U students rebel against rotten racist campus

WASHINGTON, DC, October 14—Hundreds of Black students converged today on Howard University's Blackburn Center, a main university building, to support the occupiers inside who are refusing to leave. At this proud Historically Black College/University (HBCU), with a predominantly Black and woman student body, racism and sexism are alive and well. Students are fed up with lousy housing conditions at both new dormitories and old ones. Mold is growing in the dorm rooms and water has been cut off for days at a time. Electricity and Wi-Fi have failed many times, making it impossible to attend classes online or do research and homework—even the library has been shut down! These conditions reveal that racism and sexism are the mainstays of a capitalist system that is destroying the lives of workers and students all over the world, even in spaces that liberal fascists deem “free of racism.”

As this article goes to press, hundreds of students are camped out in front of the building in solidarity, vowing to stay until their demands are met. They are bringing support for each other with bedding, food, and mobile hotspots for Wi-Fi. The University's malign negligence of the students' situation demonstrates again that, for all its boasts of “progressivity,” Howard University acts only in capitalist interests. Students and workers come last.

The revolutionary communist Progressive Labor Party (PLP) hails this student resistance! PLP members are sharing CHALLENGE with students and holding discussions about the need to go beyond this fightback and join the long-term struggle for communist revolution!

Black students rebel, vow long-term occupation

After the occupation began, Dr. Cynthia Evers, the Vice President for Student Affairs, threatened to expel the occupiers from the University while purposely cutting off air conditioning and Wi-Fi in the building. Dozens of students responded by intensifying the struggle, rushing past campus security to join the occupation. When the university president finally met with the student protest leaders, his response was basically the sound of crickets: “we're working on it and we'll meet again”, words students have heard for over a century and a half



Black workers are key to communist revolution.
Howard students deserve to run all education and all of society.



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JOIN THE INTERNATIONAL FIGHT FOR COMMUNIST REVOLUTION

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OUR FIGHT

- ★Progressive Labor Party (PLP) fights to destroy capitalism and the dictatorship of the capitalist class. We organize workers, soldiers and youth into a revolutionary movement for communism.
- ★The dictatorship of the working class — communism—can provide a lasting solution to the disaster that is today’s world for billions of people. This cannot be done through electoral politics, but requires a revolutionary movement and a mass Red Army led by PLP.
- ★Worldwide capitalism, in its relentless drive for profit, inevitably leads to war, fascism, poverty, disease, starvation and environmental destruction. The capitalist class, through its state power — governments, armies, police, schools and culture — maintains a dictatorship over the world’s workers. The capitalist dictatorship supports, and is supported by, the anti-working-class ideologies of racism, sexism, nationalism, individualism and religion.
- ★While the bosses and their mouthpieces claim “communism is dead,” capitalism is the real failure for billions worldwide. Capitalism returned to Russia and China because socialism retained many aspects of the profit system, like wages and privileges. Russia and China did not establish communism.
- ★Communism means working collectively to build a worker-run society. We will abolish work for wages, money and profits. While capitalism needs unemployment, communism needs everyone to contribute and share in society’s benefits and burdens.
- ★Communism means abolishing racism and the concept of “race.” Capitalism uses racism to super-exploit Black, Latin, Asian and indigenous workers, and to divide the entire working class.
- ★Communism means abolishing the special oppression of women— sexism—and divisive gender roles created by the class society.
- ★Communism means abolishing nations and nationalism. One international working class, one world, one Party.
- ★Communism means that the minds of millions of workers must become free from religion’s false promises, unscientific thinking and poisonous ideology. Communism will triumph when the masses of workers can use the science of dialectical materialism to understand, analyze and change the world to meet their needs and aspirations.
- ★Communism means the Party leads every aspect of society. For this to work, millions of workers — eventually everyone — must become communist organizers. Join Us!

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WHO WRITES FOR CHALLENGE?

CHALLENGE is for the working class, produced by the working class. The fact that CHALLENGE/PLP articles are not signed grows from PLP’s criticism of the cult of the individual in the former socialist Soviet Union and China. We do not want to encourage the possibility of building up a “following” around any particular individual.

While an article may be written by one person, the final version is based on collective discussion and criticism. Many times this collective discussion even precedes an individual’s writing of an article.

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Editorial

The Taiwan Debacle: U.S. and China hurtling toward war

Less than two months after the chaotic U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan, the latest in a string of U.S. military defeats since the Vietnam War, tensions with imperialist arch-rival China may be simmering to a boil. Over five days in October, China conducted 150 warplane sorties near Taiwan’s coast in the South China Sea, “an alarming escalation that coincided with China’s National Day celebrations” (msn.com, 10/13). For the finance capital main wing (the Big Fascists, see glossary on page 6) of the U.S. ruling class, military conflict with China appears to be just a matter of time—and the time may be sooner than later.

President Joe Biden is doubling down on the “great-power competition” declared by predecessor Donald Trump. As Secretary of State Anthony Blinken said in March, only China has the economic and military might to “challenge” the U.S. China already leads the world in critical technologies, from telecommunications to artificial intelligence (robeco.com, 5/10). It has the world’s largest navy and by far the most active military troops. “[G]reat powers are simply unwilling to let other great powers grow stronger at their expense,” noted the latest issue of Foreign Affairs, the liberal U.S. rulers’ top foreign policy journal. “Cold War II is already here....China is likely to be a more powerful competitor than the Soviet Union was in its prime. And this cold war is more likely to turn hot” (foreignaffairs.com, November-December).

As the U.S. empire teeters and China’s bosses turn to intensified nationalism to deflect the mass anger of exploited workers, the chances of an armed clash—whether planned or by miscalculation—are greater than ever. As Blinken acknowledged, “Our relationship with China will be competitive when it should be, collaborative when it can be, and adversarial when it must be” (reuters.com, 3/3).

Only a new mass force of communist-led workers, organized from New York to Shanghai and beyond, can drive the profit-driven warmakers from power. Only communist revolution can move forward from these dark times to smash the borders that divide our class.

Taiwan: caught in imperialist crosshairs

Since the 1950s, Taiwan has stood as an outpost of U.S. liberal democracy in China’s backyard—and an obstacle to China’s regional dominance. Today the stakes are higher than ever. The Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company is the world leader for microchips, “the building blocks of the 21st-century digital economy” (New York Times, 10/20). Biden’s administration recently reaffirmed its commitment to an independent Taiwan as “rock-solid” (Reuters, 10/6). In June, with the bipartisan U.S. Innovation and Competition Act, the U.S. Senate “controversially” called for treating Taiwan “as a sovereign state of ‘vital’ strategic importance” (Foreign Affairs, November-December).

In a related move, Biden spurned French imperialist allies by displacing them in a huge nuclear submarine deal with Australia. U.S. imperialism hadn’t shared offensive nuclear power on this scale since 1958 (NYT, 10/17), signaling a more aggressive posture toward Chinese imperialism in the Pacific (see map).

Is China ready to be a top imperialist?

In the 25 years since the 1996 crisis, Chinese imperialists have squeezed the working class to direct huge flows of capital into a frenzy of arms deployment. China spends about \$200 billion a year on its military, up 800 percent over the last 30 years (statista.com, 6/21). According to Politico, “...the U.S. military is on track to be outgunned [by China] — potentially in quantity and quality of armaments — by the end of President Joe Biden’s first term” (5/21). “I worry that they are accelerating their ambitions to supplant the United States,” Admiral Philip S. Davidson, the retiring commander of the Indo-Pacific Command, told the Senate Armed Services Committee in March. “Taiwan is clearly one of their ambitions before then, and I think the threat is manifest during this decade; in fact, in the next six years” (NYT, 10/12).

Although both China and the U.S. have been cautious to avoid direct military confrontations thus far, Taiwan is a wild card. The brutal move by China’s ruling capitalist “Communist” Party to absorb Hong Kong has been well-received by workers in China. An attack to take Taiwan



could divert workers’ attention from slowing economic growth and a troubled housing market, where giant developers like Evergrande are collapsing from debt.

Since the 1990s, as capitalism has taken deeper root in China, workers have not forgotten class struggle. They’ve launched thousands of local campaigns targeting oppressive conditions and bosses. Despite the Chinese bosses’ drive for nationalism, the legacy of communist ideas is still alive in the Chinese working class.

U.S. ruling class bumbling toward war

Chinese imperialism has been given a huge opening by repeated blunders by the U.S. bosses, from the failed “War on Terror” and the debacles in Iraq and Afghanistan, to the 2008 global economic collapse, to the botched response to Covid-19 and the deep split in the ruling class itself.

The segregationist, kkkop-backing Biden-Harris team was supposed to save the empire after the disastrous Trump years. The purging of the names of open racists from military bases reflects the liberal bosses’ understanding that a fighting force built on white nationalism can’t win future wars. A global conflict with China will require a draft that draws on the entire U.S. population, not just the white working class. The bosses need more Black and Latin officers to lead Black and Latin troops to their deaths.

As the threat from China grows, the political battle between the liberal fascists of finance capital and the more open fascists fronted by Trump continues unchecked. The liberal Big Fascists can’t afford to lose the White House in 2024 to a white nationalist candidate. But their eroding power to shape events makes the world situation even more volatile.

Opportunities and dangers in the dark night

From the great Soviet and Chinese communist revolutions to the inspirational victory of communist masses in Vietnam, the international working class has proven that it’s possible to defeat the forces of imperialism. But to many workers today, it may feel impossible to end racist police murder, or abolish the mass murder of poverty, or stop the sexism that makes women fearful of walking down streets at night. It may feel impossible to stop U.S. and Chinese imperialists from going to war over Taiwan—or to halt a runaway climate disaster.

Workers of the world: Do not despair! Our class has the ability to dethrone the imperialist warmakers from Washington to Beijing and to banish the profit system. The road to revolution is not a peaceful road or an easy road. But it is our historical task to smash the bosses’ rotten nationalism, racism, sexism, and individualism with our super-power: internationalist working-class consciousness. We have a whole, wide world—a communist world—to win.☺

SMASH ALL BORDERS

Build communist culture

CHICAGO, October 9—On a sunny fall morning, among the Saturday bustle in a south side neighborhood, communists from the Progressive Labor Party (PLP) proudly chanted “No Borders! No Nations! No Racist Deportations!” Our purpose today was a multiracial rally in solidarity with workers from Haiti and all over the world who are facing horrifically racist deportations and violence across the bosses’ artificial national borders.

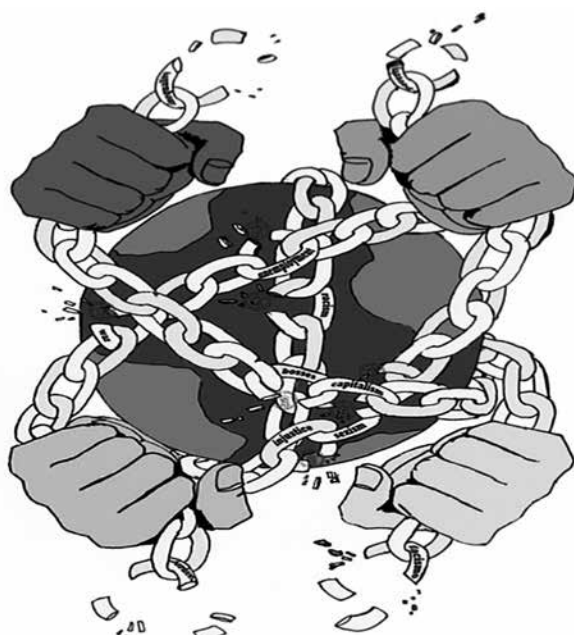
PLers distributed hundreds of copies of CHALLENGE newspaper to workers passing by on foot and stopped in their vehicles. We spoke to many workers from Haiti who expressed support for our actions of communist solidarity. We took over four corners of a busy intersection and were joined by a spirited Black worker who took the bullhorn to speak and stop traffic.

As communists, it is our duty to respond militantly whenever the capitalist bosses attack our class, whether that attack is down the street from where we live or on the other side of the planet. Ardent internationalism and antiracism are some of the strongest weapons in our arsenal to ensure the growth of a mass PLP that will one day crush capitalism and the bosses for good.

Antiracist rally resonates with workers

After close to two weeks of collective planning and organizing, we were able to bring out over a dozen PLers and friends to the solidarity rally. While there, we alternated responsibilities: one Party member would lead us in chants on the bullhorn while others distributed CHALLENGE. Other comrades held signs on the street in both Spanish and English spreading revolutionary messages like “Smash Racist Borders,” “Free Them All,” and “Building a Better World: Fight for Communism—Join Progressive Labor Party.”

Local workers eagerly looked on, curiously taking newspapers from PLers, and drivers enthusiastically honked in support as they drove by. At one point, a worker who stopped to watch expressed



his support, saying he wanted to invite friends and family and asking how to get involved.

Some of the most passionate speeches on the bullhorn were given by three newer members of the Party, including one comrade who gave their first official communist speech! Stressing our internationalism, these speeches were given in both English and Spanish.

Highlighted was the ongoing struggle of Mohawk Johnson, an antiracist fighter arrested over 400 days ago at an anti-klkkop protest last summer. He has been on house arrest ever since (See CHALLENGE, 10/22/20). The #FreeMohawk campaign is directly tied to the struggle of other workers against these racist courts worldwide. The bosses’ goal, through their kkkops at their borders or on the streets, is to keep us exploited and contained.

Collectively, our words highlighted the need to stand in solidarity with workers from Haiti, the need to fight against anti-Black racism, capitalism, and the parasitic bosses throughout the globe who force and rely on our collective compliance, silence, and fear to continue exploiting our labor. The only way to crush racism and capitalism, and achieve justice and liberation is to smash all borders, and unite the international working class.

As the rally drew to a close, our collective struggled over the idea of whether or not to take over the intersection and block traffic. While we debated, a veteran PLP member put it bluntly: if we can’t take this intersection now, how do we expect to eventually take state power? Another PLer agreed, stating that we can’t be apologetic or timid while the bosses are literally murdering us. The intersection was then taken, a satisfactory conclusion to our action.

Stoke the fire of communist revolution

As satisfying as our rally was, it only represented one half of our planned activities for the day. Later that evening, PLers and friends could be found sparking literal fires for the occasion of our annual October Revolution Celebration (see page 8). For years, we have marked the momentous event of the communist Bolsheviks leading the working class to take state power over a century ago.

This year, keeping in mind the ongoing pandemic, we held our celebration outdoors with a bonfire, socializing, singing, plus apple cider and donuts at the edge of Lake Michigan. A speech from a PLP member who works in education connected the advance of history from revolutionaries who overthrew colonialism in Haiti, to the Bolsheviks, to PLP’s present role in growing the flames of revolution:

“Look at our history—genocide, enslavement, world wars, fascism—and we still keep going. Everything that has been good for humanity has been the accomplishment of the working class. We’ve done the impossible. The Haitian Revolution, the slave rebellions here and the Russian Revolution we’re celebrating today aren’t our only examples. The bravery of the workers—the resistance, the rebellion, the genius—that’s the best of humanity and that’s what we’re fighting to save.”

Through our collective efforts, we will keep the revolutionary fires going during this difficult and dangerous period for the international working class. Our fight will never be extinguished!✊

Howard U students rebel against rotten racist campus

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at this HBCU, chartered in 1867. Howard University administrations have always served the interests of U.S. capitalists, despite their Black character. Howard U is famous for training Black servants of capitalism like Vice President Kamala Harris, whose achievements include jailing Black workers and sacrificing innocent workers around the world at the altar of U.S. imperialism. PLP has said it once, and we’ll say it again, a Black capitalist is still a capitalist. Only communist revolution will break our chains.

Howard U’s mask is off

In addition to anger over living and financial conditions, students were also furious at the Board of Trustees’ decision over the summer to dismiss student, alumni, and faculty representatives from the Board. Now the Board is openly in the hands of bankers and capitalists, without even the appearance of university representation. The Board’s chair, Laurence Morse, is a partner at Fairview Capital Partners, a private equity company; Vice-chair Mark Mason is chief financial officer of Citigroup Inc.; and Richard Goodman is a retired senior financial manager of PepsiCo.

The dismissal of student, faculty, and alumni board members was a further arrogant insult to us, but we should keep in mind that these repre-

sentatives on the Board never had voting power in any decisions. They served as fig leaves covering the capitalist, exploitative nature of the Board. No

capitalist institution will serve the needs of workers and students, and the mask of fake “representation” of Howard’s administration and Board of Trustees is finally off.

Revolution, not representation

Fighting for seats at the table, literally and figuratively, will not defeat the capitalist system that led to these housing and learning conditions in the first place. Imperialist rivals like the U.S. and China are building their forces for larger wars over who will be the top dog imperialist while working class youth, especially Black and immigrant workers, will be the first conscripted to fight and die. Howard students are under attack from the same capitalist system that is sharpening its racist attacks on the entire working class, especially Black workers, around the world.

We need to direct our energy long-term to the building of a revolutionary communist movement to topple this racist capitalist system altogether and replace it with a system where our working class sisters and brothers are in charge of our education, and our world! That’s communism. JOIN US!✊



Only communism can crush kkkops

Los Angeles, CA—Progressive Labor Party (PLP) members participated in a recent organizing retreat with a mass group against police brutality that we’re in. This created an opportunity to struggle and unite with our friends to move the fight against police brutality forward by leading with communist ideas.

“I honestly have learned a lot from PLP and agree with PLP that no matter what bill, president, defunding etc you have, as long as capitalism exists there will always be racism, poverty etc. PLP is definitely going deep to the root of the cause... CAPITALISM!” This response exemplified the sentiments of our base among families impacted by police brutality in the Los Angeles area when asked what they thought about the retreat. For all the strengths of the group, those families closest to the Party immediately recognized the limitations of the reform movement.

Within the struggle against police brutality we are having some success in having communist ideas lead the struggle. At the same time, as communist ideas are becoming more accepted the bigger movement led by reformist forces aligned with the Big Fascist liberal wing of the ruling class are shifting their rhetoric to sound more militant. It becomes clear why the liberals are the main danger for our class as they spend billions of dollars more each year on the police to attack workers while funding movements to sound revolutionary that are working to keep people tied to the bosses’ system. This left sounding reformism is part of what we have to struggle against within our anti-police brutality group.

This is a long-term struggle

We have reached this point after almost two years of organizing with families: study groups,

club meetings, base building, and fighting in the reform movement alongside families to expose the limitations of reforms. We are in a position now where families want to struggle with other families around PLP’s ideas. Now that the mass organization’s leadership body includes impacted family members (something we struggled for), this makes room for us to continue to sharpen the contradiction of reform vs. revolution among families.

The retreat focused on evaluating the last year of work the group has done and planning the next year. It included six people from five different impacted families and eight people from the core organizing team. We wanted to struggle for a shift from individual family actions (which has engulfed the last year of work) to collective political campaigns. Since this was the beginning of a new leadership structure to include families, one Party member planned a session that discussed what family leadership looks like and how we build collective power. This session brought forward important lessons such as the criticality of organizing among the working class to grow our movement as well as getting to the root of a problem. This opened the door for us to raise where and how we organize. Families liked the idea of fighting back collectively. Mental health will be the focus of our first campaign. Families also agreed with meeting once a month and opening each meeting with a reading and political discussion so we can all search for the root causes together.

Continual fight against the bosses’ reformism

Ten years ago, one of the main calls of the national movement against police brutality was for body cameras and more training for police. Since the murders of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor,

the sharpening of political consciousness of workers all over the world, the bosses mass media has been forced to move their rhetoric to the left. If someone was to talk about body cams today, they would be shouted out of the room. Defunding and even abolition of the police are the new catch phrases.

While this creates definite opportunities for us, there are also dangers. As in every other aspect of our work, the liberal ruling class and their politicians are the main danger. The police brutality movement is no different. For example, the politics of the mass movement in Los Angeles, including the mass organization we belong to, openly calls for abolition and has some understanding of the root causes of capitalist exploitation. Having said that, in spite of their correct criticisms of the “reform movement,” they fall into the same trap, as they ultimately contain their fightback within the bosses state apparatus advocating for so-called “non-reformist reforms” and policy changes that would shift funding away from police and prisons towards expanding social services. Not only do they incorrectly believe the ruling class would allow this, they think that their position is fundamentally different from other reforms, and more critically do not see the need for a Party such as PLP, or the need for an armed working class to lead a communist revolution that smashes the bosses state and establish a dictatorship of the working class!

We will be exploring this with the families in our upcoming book club and will continue to raise our communist analysis in study (including in our PLP study groups) and in practice. We hope to recruit those families closest to us and support them in leading the struggle around the Party’s ideas with other families.☺

Indigenous Day

Defeat nationalism with communist internationalism

NEW YORK CITY, October 10—A multiracial group of antiracists and Progressive Labor Party (PLP) members helped organize a march today: Indigenous People’s Day at Columbus Circle. The main contradiction in this movement is nationalism versus working-class consciousness. We must reject unity on the basis of the concept of “race” or “nationality” and unite on the multiracial basis of our class, the working class. PLP members within this movement are struggling with friends and fighters to win them to this communist outlook.

Struggle inside the mass organization

The organizing committee was made up of Palestinian, Asian, and Colombian workers, three of whom have indigenous roots. The initiative arose after an educational activity on ecology and politics in which we decided to focus on the struggle of indigenous workers and at the same time connecting it with environmental destruction.

In the organizing meetings, we addressed the capitalist interests that value nothing more than economic profits and that unleash imperialism and devastating extractivist projects. It was also discussed how so many other workers—indigenous, Black, Latin, Asian, white—suffer from the exploitation of the ruling class and the inhuman and destructive pursuits of capitalism.

New York City invests millions of dollars a year to protect Columbus Circle and the statue of the so-called “discoverer” of America. A racist lie, America was not discovered. It was conquered and later stolen, and its imperialist discovery is made possible by the genocide of indigenous workers, enslavement of Black workers, and the servitude of white workers.

Workers here are mobilizing to change the holiday of Columbus Day and recognize it as the Day of the Indigenous People. A crumb of reform for the

working-class.

In other countries, such as those of South America, October 12 is recognized as the International Day of Race or Day of Respect for Cultural Diversity.

But make no mistake—those countries aren’t any less racist against indigenous and Black workers. Workers need to seize state power, not accept symbolic empty gestures. Only a communist party, PLP, can achieve that.

A sexist tradition is a sexist tradition

After chanting, we continued with a teach-in for which, despite the rain or thanks to it, we had an audience of 40 people. The first speaker told us about the need to take care of some traditions of indigenous communities as well as the environment. He also emphasized the importance of connecting with nature and developing a different relationship with “mother earth.” The romanticization of indigenous culture exempts them—wrongly—from criticism and analysis. Today, one such tradition was exposed for its sexism.

During the ride to Randall’s Island to join another Indigenous People’s event, each chant was multiracial and international. The march joined a cultural celebration. There, a PL’er who also volunteered for the event, suffered discrimination because she was a woman. The culture of this specific indigenous community bases this sexist discrimination on sacred and spiritualistic aspects of its tradition. But this is capitalist crap! Under no circumstances

Indigenous Day Speech

I join you today as a member of the Progressive Labor Party, as a communist, who is committed to overcoming the dark history of colonialism and capitalism. We need to overcome the oppression of a profit-driven system so that we can survive as a species and so that we can continue with some of the qualities that make us worthy of survival. So much of what made humanity strong and beautiful has been lost to individualism and the placement of profit above everything, and it is killing us. Capitalism is always hungry for more resources to exploit—both from the earth and from us—and cannot tame itself enough to allow us to heal.

The so-called progress of capitalism has marched side by side with death in the form of war, colonization, industrialization, and the destruction of our interconnecting ecosystems and human relations.

Under capitalism, we have been turned against each other, so that our relationships are combative and monetized. [Capitalism has] turned against the planet that nurtures us. It is good to get rid of the monuments to colonizers and murderers. It is good to have land acknowledgements. But what we need is a transformation, a revolution, that brings a new era without domination.

We cannot go back, only forward, and I have staked my commitment to communism—to a society in which people work together, as family, unifying humanity and restoring balance to a world that has been torn apart. And so in this struggle, I stand with you.

If the best parts of humanity are to survive, we must come together and end the destruction that is capitalism. I stand with you to honor our [working-class] ancestors by building a world that overcomes borders, nurtures the best in each of us, and heals the wounds from which we collectively suffer.

So let us celebrate our [predecessors] while we build toward something better—a world that honors [our class]. The Progressive Labor Party looks to a better future with you.

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Alabama miners strike holds strong

ALABAMA and NEW YORK— As the miners fight on into month seven, support for the striking Alabama miners continues to gain momentum, despite the U.S. bosses' media blackout. As CUNY students, staff and faculty have gone back to classes, communists in the Progressive Labor Party (PLP), friends and antiracists are finding initial successes in building solidarity campaigns at CUNY campuses across the city. As winter approaches, the growing support is coming at a crucial time for the strike.

For the miners striking against Warrior Met Coal Company, the struggle is sharpening. Even though the number of scabs working in the mines has increased to 100, the 1,000 remaining miners have closed ranks, are holding fast, and are fighting back. PLP once again salutes and supports the miners' fightback!

With more miners receiving and distributing CHALLENGE with each issue, our plans for continuing our Solidarity Campaign and building for a Winter Project are taking shape.

We invite all striking miners to join PLP and help lead a communist revolution to smash the racist, sexist capitalist system that created Warrior Met and all the capitalists like them, once and for all!

"Nothing to feel defeated about"

Every miner that crosses the picket line is a personal blow for the Warrior Met miners— "a brother lost" and "a nightmare situation," as a miner recently explained to us, during a recent update on the struggle from one of the Party's new friends in Alabama.

As the strike reaches seven months, and without help coming from politicians from either the Democrat or Republican Parties at the state or national level, some of the politically inexperienced miners have been seduced into crossing the picket lines and scabbing. Miners remaining on the picket lines are forced to take other jobs to defray mounting bills, while there is a growing sense among some miners that the UMWA is keeping them in the dark about ongoing negotiations.

For most miners, however, the struggle is stiffening resolve. As one Black miner recently put it:

A strike is a battle. It's a war. That's a challenging situation for some people. You have to make a decision about what you're willing to sacrifice. For me, everything, but that took experience. You have to go through fire to re-



move impurities. This is how we go through hardship. For someone who's never experienced hardship, it's hard.

Black workers, especially miners in Alabama, know plenty about hardship through fierce racism—and fierce fightback. From the mass movements defending the Scottsboro Boys to the sharecroppers', steel and miners' unions, Black workers' resistance has long been the key to uniting and igniting the entire working class in rebellion. This

Strike Fund to Support Miners

We call on all workers, and youth, especially college and high school students, faculty, and staff supporters of the strike to help the relief effort! Every student group, union chapter, and mass organization can organize a local solidarity committee, spread the word, distribute CHALLENGE, and get people involved. Despite the complex attitudes about the UMWA's role in the strike, donating to the strike fund and to District 20 is the surest way to send support. This money will go directly to the miners

For electronic donations to the UMWA Strike Aid Fund:

<https://umwa.org/umwa2021strikefund>

Checks can be sent to:

UMWA 2021 Strike Aid Fund

PO Box 513

Dumfries, VA 22026

To send toys directly to District 20 for the Christmas Toy Drive, and urgently needed supplies such as diapers, sanitary napkins, formula, toothpaste, paper towels, soap, shampoo, and deodorant:

UMWA Auxiliary 2245/ 2368

21922 AL—216

McCalla, AL 35111

history continues being written today, and this group of Black and white miners and new CHALLENGE readers are teaching us that the course of struggle is long, and setbacks are "nothing to feel defeated about."

"But we're still fighting and good is coming from this. We're making new friends, and relationships are getting stronger. The battle goes on. Some of us have been fighting for equality all our lives, and we can dig it."

What we do counts

PL'ers and friends are organizing our base to rise to this challenge. Solidarity committees and

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Defeat nationalism with communist internationalism

Continued from page 4

racist and sexist practices do not of any kind have a basis and reason for existing. That is why as a working class we have to continue fighting to abolish capitalism, the source of these divisions.

Workers must own what we produce

When we marched towards the subway station, we kept the doors open so we could have free access to a public service. "Whose streets? Our streets! Whose train? Our train! Whose bus? Our bus!" Public services—actually, all needs—should be free. Under communism, all worker needs would be met by us, the workers.

In addition to chants like "Hey, hey! Ho, ho! This racist system has got to go," "Who has the power? We have the power!" there were three short speeches in English and Spanish, one of them by a communist friend who described October 12 as the date that "symbolically constitutes the beginning of a political-military occupation that resulted in extermination of more than 80 million people and the slavery and forced displacement of another hundreds of thousands."



Communist spirit

The last speech was by a PL'er, who spoke openly of her commitment to "overcome the dark night of capitalism and colonialism" and of the need for communism to solve the environmental crisis and racist discrimination. "We [working class] need to [smash this] profit-driven system so that we can survive as a species," In capitalism, "we are pitted against each other and against the planet that nourishes us".

A PL'er shared with us the CHALLENGE editorial (9/8) about the racist treatment of refugees from Haiti. This reminded us that the struggle for liberation and solidarity for our class is the same across the globe. The working class has a need for unity—unity for equity, dignity and respect for our power. In every situation, communists demonstrate their love for the working class. We know that capitalism will be defeated and a communist world will prevail, where workers fight together for their common class interests. PLP is committed to doing that and bringing the best out of every individual with communist spirit.✊

LETTERS

We encourage all CHALLENGE readers to send in letters and articles about their experiences fighting the bosses worldwide.

Alabama strike reveals capitalist corruption

After visiting Alabama miners and staying in touch with them over the last month and a half, our club has been able to reach out to miners in other countries to connect with them and support them. A few activities are coming up! One, is to celebrate Bolshevik Revolution Day (see page 8) on November 6 at Brighton Beach. We will sell some home-made mead and food to collect funds and support the striking miners in Alabama. Our second goal is to organize an international conference on November 20 to study the history of mining as well as to understand and learn from the miners' experiences. These two events will prepare us for a winter project in Alabama on December 20, where we will support the strike, collaborate at a toy drive and continue building solidarity with the miners.

BlackRock is the largest asset manager in the world and the largest shadow bank. It is the largest stockholder of WarriorMet, the coal company in Alabama where the miners are on strike. Aside from Alabama, this multinational company is involved in the exploitation of mine workers in countries from South America and Africa. At the same time, this corporation fuels war and death around the world by investing in weapons manufacturers, military contractors, and civilian firearms manufacturers in the U.S., Afghanistan and the Middle East.

We, as a Progressive Labor Party club, think that it is important to build internationalism and to draw the connections that one struggle has with another. The world is run by a few companies that control the money and resources and decide the future of the working class.

Our mission is to unveil these capitalists that create war and destruction across the globe and build solidarity among us so that we can overthrow imperialism in and outside of the U.S. We hope you can mark off these dates on your calendar and join us for the events. They will be fun!

★★★★★

Building a base fundamental to struggle and morale

We are Progressive Labor Party (PLP)

members that have been organizing with a collective of students, staff, and faculty at the City University of New York (CUNY). During the ongoing pandemic, we have had some modest successes in helping to lead the campaign to build strike readiness against racist austerity. This includes a number of militant caravans to the homes of CUNY presidents, marches through the community, teach-ins and speak-outs, CHALLENGE sales and study groups. We are also active in a collective of rank and file union members who are open to our ideas and agree that students are the key element in building this fightback.

This semester started somewhat slowly for us. It's been hard to get students to attend events and sometimes our Zoom meetings, usually robust, have ended up small and more low key. We always have big plans, call for mass events, and are good at being bold, but after a few meetings that were not well attended, we wondered if this semester might be one where we just can't get things going.

Subjectivity is the enemy! That feeling that "things are not going my way," that our own view on things is what should guide our actions, these are fatal mistakes in the class struggle. The power of the collective is much stronger than subjectivity. Through discussions with other members of our mass organization and insisting that we keep trying, the last few weeks we saw our perseverance pay off. We had an excellent student study group with some of our students where we discussed many important political questions, including the key question of how we can reach more people with PLP's ideas. We had a well attended student meeting and we helped to lead a student speak-out on campus two weeks ago against CUNY's racist disorganization. The speak-out was well organized, got front page coverage in a local newspaper, and energized all of us to continue fighting back!

There are important lessons that we can learn from the masses of students and workers.

In this period we have learned that relying on our base is key—they were the ones pushing us forward to hold

these events. We also learned that our seriousness and dedication builds confidence in us as organizers, and in PLP as a Party that can lead the workers to our ultimate victory. We learned that we need to continue pushing forward, meeting, planning, struggling...and even in what can feel like difficult times, keep going forward!

★★★★★

Young communists learn from leadership in action

I recently attended my first Party cadre school, which I led along with four other Progressive Labor Party (PLP) members. Being a new and young member of PLP, I was intimidated by the task when first offered. However, it was a valuable experience in many ways. In the months leading up, I coordinated planning meetings with my comrades, and we gradually built our vision for the event. Up until the day of the event, we had only met and discussed virtually—which helped in terms of seeing all the planning notes but lacked the same energy as in-person gatherings.

Our cadre school completely made up for the time apart. With one of our discussion leaders out of state, we led virtual and live discussions based on the theme Communism: Past, Present, and Future. About 40 comrades and friends of the party participated in discussions and reflected on communism's distinction from capitalism and socialism. Two of our comrades, who are Metro workers, ended our event with a discussion on an ideal transportation system. One comrade from New York pointed out the ruling class's tactics to divide workers over financial insecurities for transportation fare.

An older comrade, who introduced me to the Party, commended me and our fellow comrade who led virtually. Despite technical issues and timing, we succeeded in facilitating engaging conversations and using our time to analyze the flaws of the old communist movement and our own actions to fight against the oppressive system of capitalism.

★★★★★

Alabama miners strike holds strong

Continued on page 5

support for the miners are being organized, with wide nets being cast across CUNY campuses and in the CUNY faculty and staff union, the Professional Staff Congress.

The first demonstration currently in the works is for BlackRock, the \$14 trillion-rich Wall Street asset management company and Warrior Met's largest single shareholder. The second is at CSX, to help meet more rail workers and organize pressure against CSX to stop transporting scab coal. We are also planning activities and a fundraiser for the miners, and a virtual international miners' conference, where the miners will present on the strike.

Donations to UMWA District 20 continue to come in electronically and by mail, as the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) launches its Christmas Toy Drive for the children of the miners this holiday season.



Currently, the miners receive only a biweekly \$700 through the UMWA strike fund, which one miner with small children told us, "doesn't pay sh*t."

Solidarity forever

In the meantime, our new friends in Alabama are discussing and coordinating with us for a PLP Winter Project in Alabama. With more details coming in upcoming issues of CHALLENGE, we are preparing the project to bring relief and support the picket line duty during the colder months of the holiday season.

Our immediate task is to expand this campaign beyond CUNY and into the high schools, the MTA, and to cities across the U.S. and internationally (see box). Everything we do counts. Already, contact has been made with miners in two other countries. We continue to fight and make the miners' strike a "school for communism," and have already been humbled by the lessons.

What we can learn about the persistence in struggle, confidence in the working class, and practice organizing in this strike will forge a mass PLP that will smash this entire capitalist system, from New York City to Beijing. JOIN US!

GLOSSARY COMMUNIST TERMS

Fascism

Capitalism's response to a crisis of their system, when the bosses can no longer sustain the charade of liberal democracy and resort to more direct control and state terror instead. Fascism is marked by the ruling capitalists disciplining their own ranks to serve the urgent needs of the capitalist state and weather the crisis. To defend their system from internal and external threats, they use all the means available in their state apparatus, including violence. To build unity within their class and loyalty from workers, they rely on nationalist politics and calls for sacrifice. Their strategy is to mislead the working class to kill our working class sisters and brothers in the next inter-imperialist war.

Big Fascists

The Big Fascists are the dominant finance capitalist faction of the U.S. ruling class. They represent the wealthiest and most powerful bosses in the U.S., including multinational banks like Chase and Citibank, multinational oil companies like ExxonMobil, the big automakers, Boeing, Amazon, and the major media companies. As the dominant grouping since World War II, the Big Fascists were the architects of the liberal world order with the U.S. bosses on top. Their dominance rests on U.S. financial and military power and its strategic control of the Middle East and the flow of oil to Europe, Asia, and Africa. To sustain this dominance, they need to rebuild a huge, multiracial military for inter-imperialist war, most likely with China.

Small Fascists

The Small Fascists are a group of domestically oriented U.S. capitalists who are challenging the Big Fascists over the direction of U.S. imperialism. Since their interests are less tied to controlling the flow of oil, they are against heavy taxation to keep troops in the Middle East and in general oppose costly military bases and invasions. They're willing to rely on a smaller, whiter army, backed by nuclear weapons and the Air Force. They use open racism to build a political following.

Creation of Race

How The U.S. Created Race & Racism to Divide the Working Class

“Fork by fork, step by step, option by option, America or, to be more precise, the men who spoke in the name of America decided that it was going to be a white place defined negatively by the bodies and the blood of the reds and the blacks. And that decision, which was made in the 1660s and elaborated over a two-hundred-year period, foreclosed certain possibilities in America—perhaps forever—and set off depth charges that are still echoing and re-echoing in the commonwealth. What makes this all the more mournful is that it didn’t have to happen that way. There was another road—but that road wasn’t taken. In the beginning, as we have seen, there was no race problem in America. The race problem in America was a deliberate invention of men who systematically separated blacks and whites in order to make money.”

—“The Road Not Taken,” Lerone Bennett (1970)

The Body of Liberties, 1641: Massachusetts becomes the first colony to legalize slavery. This is done through the passage of the Body of Liberties. Under section 91 the article clearly sanctioned slavery - and creates three categories of workers: Native Americans (Reds), white workers under the system of indenture, and Black workers.

Salem Massachusetts, 1645: Emanuel Downing writes to his brother-in-law about a scheme to trade captured Native Americans for Africans, claiming that the Puritans can maintain “20 Moors cheaper than one English servant.”

The Body of Liberties, 1662: The Bodies of Liberties was amended to include the enslavement of a slave woman's offspring to be a legal slave. This guaranteed that offspring of all slaves were considered as the same legal status as their mother, a slave.

The Royal African Company, 1672: The British Parliament chartered the Royal African Company (RAC). This company would have a monopoly on the slave trade between Africa and America. All slaves were to be brought to America only through this company.

Bacon's Rebellion, 1676: Stricter slave codes emerged in Virginia after Bacon's Rebellion in 1676, when wealthy planters decided to abolish indentured servitude and establish permanent slavery for Africans, fearing that class conflict would undermine their tobacco plantation holdings. Also in 1676, a law was enacted that prohibited free Black people from having white servants.

Virginia General Assembly, 1691: Any white person married to a “black or mulatto” person was banished and a systematic plan was established to capture “outlying slaves.”

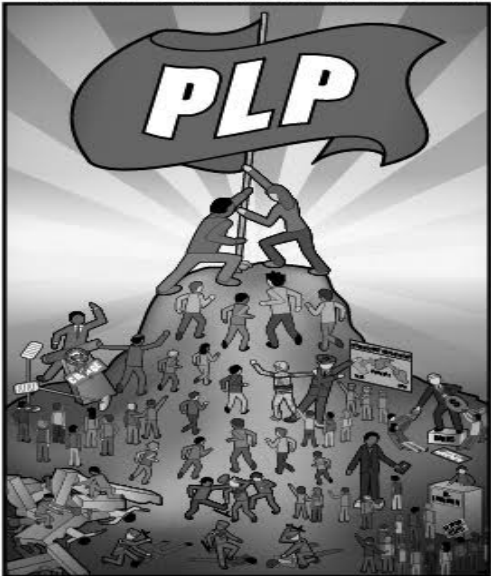
The Negro Act, 1740: The comprehensive Negro Act of 1740 passed in South Carolina made it illegal for enslaved workers to move abroad, assemble in groups, raise food, earn money, and learn to write English. Additionally, owners were permitted to kill rebellious enslaved workers if necessary.

The Naturalization Act of 1790: Alternately known as the Nationality Act, this act restricted citizenship to “any alien, being a free white person” who had been in the U.S. for two years. In effect, it left out indentured servants, enslaved workers, and most women.

The Indian Removal Act, 1830: Signed into law by Andrew Jackson, The Removal Act paved the way for the forced expulsion of tens of thousands of American Indians from their traditional homelands to the West, an event widely known as the “Trail of Tears,” a forced resettlement of the native population.

The Foreign Miners Tax, 1850: The California legislature passes the Foreign Miners Tax, which requires Chinese and Latin American gold miners to pay a special tax on their holdings, a tax not required of white miners.

**CAPITALISM
BREEDS SEXISM
RACISM
& IMPERIALISM!**



**FIGHT FOR A COMMUNIST
WORLD
BUILD THE INTERNATIONAL
PLP!
PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY**



RED EYE ON THE NEWS . . .

EU uses fascists to keep migrants out

Der Spiegel, 7/2021–Powerful men in dark uniforms are battering Afghans and Pakistanis who have come to Europe to apply for asylum. Reporters are filming their every move, as they chase 22 refugees out of the European Union, forcing them back into Bosnia-Herzegovina. One of the masked men swings again and again with his club, aiming at the legs of the migrants and making them stumble into the chest-deep border river. In the Aegean, according to witness testimony, masked men have repeatedly pulled refugees out to sea and abandoned them on inflatable rafts.

Members receive special training, during which they are taught how to wield a truncheon. Many of the unit's leaders are war veterans who spent the 1990s fighting against Serbian troops. Some of the men can be seen on Instagram and Facebook with right-wing extremist and fascist symbols.

According to publicly available documents, the EU is paying for the lodging of the officers involved...Brussels is also covering overtime for border officials along with per diems.

Police budgets increasing around the U.S.

NYT, 10/10–In cities across America, police departments are getting their money back. From New York to Los Angeles, departments that saw their funding targeted amid nationwide protests over the killing of George Floyd last year have watched as local leaders voted for increases in police spending, with an additional \$200 million allocated to the

New York Police Department and a 3% boost given to the Los Angeles force.

After slashing police spending last year, Austin, Texas restored the department's budget and raised it to new heights. In Burlington, Vt., the city that Senator Bernie Sanders once led as mayor went from cutting its police budget to approving \$10,000 bonuses for officers to stay on the job.

But perhaps nowhere has the contrast been as stark as in Dallas, where Democrat Mayor Eric Johnson not only proposed to restore money to the department but moved to increase the number of officers on the street. Johnson had drawn a connection between his approach and that of other Black leaders, like Eric Adams, the Democratic mayoral nominee in New York, who see the police as a necessary part of helping neighborhoods.

War between China and U.S. grows closer

NYT, 10/10–As confrontations intensify, the balance of power around Taiwan is fundamentally shifting, pushing a decades-long impasse over its future into a dangerous new phase. After holding out against unification demands from China's communist rulers for more than 70 years,

Taiwan is now at the heart of the deepening discord between China and the United States. The island's fate has the potential to reshape the regional order and even to ignite a military conflagration. The United States wants to thwart any invasion but has watched its military dominance in Asia steadily erode.

China's ambitious leader, Xi Jinping, now presides over what is arguably the country's most potent military in history. Chinese warships fired missiles into the sea south of Taiwan, while amphibious landing vehicles swept ashore a beach in China. It was one of the largest exercises ever to simulate an invasion across the Taiwan Strait.

“Even moderate voices in Beijing have been calling for tossing out peaceful reunification,” said Oriana Skylar Mastro, a fellow at Stanford University's Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies. “I think the military option is the option now.”

Ruth Bader Ginsburg needed protection from her racist views

Daily Mail, 10/13–Katie Couric has admitted to 'protecting' Ruth Bader Ginsburg from public backlash by cutting out negative comments she made about people who kneel during the national anthem. Couric writes that she edited out a part where Ginsburg said that those who kneel during the national anthem are showing 'contempt for a government that has made it possible for their parents and grandparents to live a decent life.'

Ginsburg made comments about Colin Kaepernick, the former NFL player behind the national anthem protest against racial injustice. Couric felt that when Ginsburg said that people like Kaepernick were 'dumb and disrespectful' they were comments that were 'unworthy of a crusader for equality' like the liberal Supreme Court justice.

Bolshevik Revolution

WORKERS TOOK POWER; WE WILL AGAIN

One hundred and four years ago, November 7, 1917, marked the beginning of the single most important event of the 20th century, the Bolshevik Revolution, which directly inspired the Chinese Revolution and anti-imperialist struggles around the world from Vietnam to Africa to Latin America.

Russia's working class, headed by the revolutionary communists of the Bolshevik Party and its leader, Vladimir Lenin, freed one-sixth of the world's surface from capitalism. They proved once and for all that it was possible to strive for a world without exploitation, where those who produce all value, the working class, can enjoy the fruits of their labor and not have it stolen by a few parasitical bosses and their lackeys.

The Bolshevik revolution was the first serious attempt by workers and peasants to seize, hold and consolidate state power. Even though capitalism has returned to the former Soviet Union, workers will not forget that the Soviet working class defeated capitalism in 1917. They smashed the imperialist armies of 17 countries (including Japan, the U.S., Britain, France, among others) which invaded Russia in 1918 to try to crush the revolution. They freed the masses, especially women, from the yoke of capitalist, feudal and religious oppression. And then in 1945 the Soviet Red Army defeated the mightiest and most barbaric army the capitalists had ever organized: the Nazi Wehrmacht.

The revolution frightened the world's bosses, who immediately sent armies from 17 countries to try—in Churchill's words—to "strangle it in the cradle." From 1918 to 1923, millions of workers led by the Red Army defeated the imperialists' counter-revolution. Nearly five million died in that battle, many of whom were the most committed workers the revolution had produced. Lenin himself died because of injuries inflicted by a hired killer.

The masses showed great courage and determination to defend and build their revolution, under the leadership of their revolutionary party. They proved that revolutionary violence on the part of the working class and peasantry was vital to the seizure of state power.

Achievements of the Revolution

The Bolshevik Revolution brought Russia to heights of productive development that capitalism, given a similar time period and circumstances, could never have dreamed of. Bringing the working class to power, the Revolution coordinated their social-economic efforts for the production and exchange of the necessities, the comforts and even some luxuries of life, making them available to all. The Soviet system of production was for use, not for profit. This can only be accomplished by abolishing capitalist profits and the private ownership of property, with its exploitation, poverty, unemployment, racism, fascism and imperialist wars.

In the 1930s, when the entire capitalist world sank into depression, and tens of millions worldwide were left jobless and starving (much like today), the Soviet Union was forging ahead building a new society without unemployment. They created some measure of a decent life for workers in an incredibly short time, transforming a 90 percent illiteracy rate into one in which nearly everyone was literate.

Around 1938, without any official declaration, the Soviet Union had achieved the era of free bread. One could enter a cafeteria, order little or nothing, and receive all the bread one wanted. You needed, you



received. Even during a drive for heavy industry, living standards rose strikingly when the rest of the world was mired in the Great Depression.

The Soviet Union not only freed workers but also fought against racism and sexism. The battle against racism was particularly significant. As communist Paul Robeson said about his trips to the Soviet Union, he "felt like a human being for the first time since I grew up. Here I am not a Negro but a human being. Before I came I could hardly believe that such a thing could be.... Here, for the first time in my life, I walk in full human dignity."

Heroic fight against the Nazis

In 1941, the bosses again tried to destroy the revolution. Hitler, using all of Europe's resources and the largest military machine ever assembled, invaded the Soviet Union with four million troops. They discovered the Soviets were no pushover as occurred in Western Europe. Hitler's prediction — endorsed by western military "experts" — of capturing Moscow in six weeks went up in smoke.

Nazi troops found total destruction and desolation in every captured city or town — the "scorched earth" policy. Soviet defenders destroyed everything that the Nazi's might use. The communists then organized armed resistance behind enemy lines: the Partisans. Over 6,000 factories were dismantled and moved east of the Ural Mountains, re-assembled to produce weapons again, a feat requiring total unity and support of Soviet workers, unmatched by any country, before or since. Soviet soldiers and workers fought for Stalingrad block-by-block, house-by-house and room-by-room to halt the "unbeatable" Nazi invaders. Workers in arms factories produced weapons 24 hours a day for the Red Army, working

12-hour shifts. When Nazi troops captured factories, heroic Soviet workers and soldiers would re-take them.

The entire German Sixth Army and 24 of Hitler's generals were surrounded and killed or captured in the battle of Stalingrad. Never again would the Nazis mount a successful offensive against the Red Army. Stalingrad was truly the turning point of the Second World War. Not until the Nazis were on the run following their defeats at Stalingrad and in the Battle of the Kursk — the biggest armored battle in world history, involving millions of soldiers and 6,000 tanks — did the U.S.-U.K. forces invade Western Europe. It was the communist-led Soviet Union that smashed the Nazis, the largest and most powerful army ever mounted by a capitalist power.

All this was accomplished under the leadership of Josef Stalin. No wonder he is reviled to this day by world capitalism.

Lessons to Be Learned

Unfortunately, the Bolsheviks suffered from many political weaknesses, which led to the return of capitalism to the USSR. From the beginning they believed that to achieve communism, first socialism had to be established, a belief Karl Marx had advanced. We have learned from that experience that socialism retained capitalism's wage system and therefore failed to wipe out many aspects of the profit system. Socialism put forward material incentives to the working class rather than political ones as the way to win workers to communism. We must win masses of workers to abolish capitalism's wage system and its division of labor and fight directly for communism.

Today, no country is led by communists, but this is a temporary historical setback. While this long and volatile era of widening imperialist wars and fascist attacks on the working class is upon us, every dark night has its end.

PLP is a product of both the old International Communist Movement and the struggle against its weaknesses. Pseudo-leftist groups have not learned history's lessons and continue to fight for nationalist "sharing of power" with capitalists, a la Venezuela's Hugo Chavez, not for the working-class seizure of power and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Our movement is daily fighting to learn from the Soviet Union's great battles and achievements as well as its deadly errors that led to its collapse, mainly that reformism, racism, nationalism and all forms of concessions to capitalism only lead workers to defeat. Give the ruling class an inch and they'll grab a mile.

We honor the bold fight by the workers of the Bolshevik Revolution against capitalism and for a working-class communist world. Today, we must organize workers, students and soldiers to build a mass worldwide working class Party that will turn this era of imperialist wars into a new, international communist revolution.

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